

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Lincoln Collection

Bibliography Series

**Mary Lincoln's Music Box
Operatic Arias**

(Revised 2/28/10)

Tunes Listed on the Underside of the Music Box Lid

Among the many Lincoln-related artifacts in the possession of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum is a circa 1870s music box made in Geneva, Switzerland (Inventory #LR 207). It is a rectangle rosewood box (12"x 24"x10") containing a brass cylinder.

Mary Lincoln's sister, Frances Todd Wallace, gave the music box to Mary in November 1876. Mrs. Wallace's granddaughter, Florence J. Patteson, donated it to the Presidential Library's predecessor institution, the Illinois State Historical Library.

The music box plays ten operatic airs which are listed on a label on the underside of the music box lid. The list is as follows:

Title of Opera	Title of song
1. Faust ¹	Chorus
2. Corn flower ²	Valse
3. L' Africaine ³	Oui Fallut II
4. Undine ⁴	Finale
5. Cavalier ⁵	Mazurka
6. The last rose of summer ⁶	
7. Lucrezia Borgia ⁷	Maffio Orsini
8. Oui et Non ⁸	Quadrille
9. Don Pasquale ⁹	Un foco insolito
10. Les Huguenots ¹⁰	Marche

(Research by Tom Schwartz, James Cornelius—2007/2008)

¹ Charles Gounod's opera *Faust* premiered on March 19, 1859, based upon Goethe's drama.

² Charles Coote's song 'Corn Flower Valse', comp. and first pub. late 1850s.

³ Giacomo Meyerbeer's opera *L'Africaine* premiered in Paris, April 28, 1865; in New York, Dec. 1, 1865

⁴ Opera by E. T. A. Hoffmann; or by Albert Lortzing, 1845?

⁵ *Need more information.* Not Mascagni's 1890 'Cavalleria Rusticana'; maybe by Meyerbeer?

⁶ Friedrich Von Flotow used this song in his opera *Martha*. The poem is by Thomas Moore.

⁷ Gaetano Donizetti wrote the opera *Lucrezia Borgia* in 1834. Maffio Orsini, the contralto character, sings "Il segrato per esse felice."

⁸ *Need more information.* A quadrille is a balletic dance; probably a French song here.

⁹ Gaetano Donizetti wrote the opera *Don Pasquale* in 1843. Aria "Ah! Un foco insolito" in Act 1, scene 1.

¹⁰ Giacomo Meyerbeer wrote the opera *Les Huguenots* in 1836. The first 'Marche' comes in act I; others?